The Seventeenth Annual Sidney W. Mintz Lecture in Anthropology

"IMAGINARY MONEYS: TRANSACTIONS, MARKETS AND THE STATE IN HAITI"

Federico Neiburg
Professor of Anthropology
The Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

8:00 p.m.,
Wednesday, November 10, 2010
Mason Hall Auditorium
Parking: South Gate Garage, off Wyman Park Drive
The Homewood Campus

Reception to Follow
This series honors Sidney W. Mintz for his contributions to anthropology and to the Hopkins Department, which he helped to create in 1975. The Lectures are sustained by a fund created for this purpose, to which many of Professor Mintz’s friends, colleagues and students have contributed.

The Lectures aim to assess anthropology’s achievements in research areas on which Professor Mintz has worked, and to consider research directions for the future. Hence they may deal with such questions as political and economic inequality, racism, and ethnicity, as seen from anthropology’s interdisciplinary perspective. The Lectures usually focus upon key issues in anthropology and to the Hopkins Department, which he participated last year in a conference at Johns Hopkins, organized by Professor Jane Guyer, chair of the Department of Anthropology.

At the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, where he has taught since. But he found time to teach as well as at the École Normale Supérieure (Paris), the Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia (Mexico City), and the Universidad de Buenos Aires: He was a Hewlett Visiting Scholar at the University of Chicago, and participated last year in a conference at Johns Hopkins, organized by Professor Jane Guyer, chair of the Department of Anthropology.

Professor Neiburg has carried out field research in Mexico, Argentina and Brazil. But since 2007 he has led a pioneering collective anthropological research project, based in the Republic of Haiti. That project, with which he deals in part in his Mintz Lecture, involves the gathering of considerable ethnographic data on the daily life of the Haitian people. The project has also become an important arena for the training of young Brazilian and Haitian ethnographers, under the auspices of academic institutions in both nations. As such, it promises to serve as a model for future such enterprises.

In his early postdoctoral research, Professor Neiburg looked at the links that tied together the family relations of academic intellectuals and political practice. In doing so he paid particular attention to the ways that kinship was implicated in the rise and perpetuation of peronismo in Argentina. That research resulted in another prize-winning book (Los intelectuales y la invenión del peronismo), a solid contribution to the anthropology of intellectuals, national cultures and political leadership.

In recent years, Professor Neiburg’s investigations have been concerned with the anthropology of money: the uses of numeration and the relationships between ethnography and history. His work aims to uncover links between cultural forms and political economy; to treat issues of social assortment and inequality; and to examine the social and technical history of food. He has done fieldwork in Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Haiti, Iran, and Hong Kong.

Mintz’s latest book, Three Ancient Colonies. Caribbean Themes and Variations (The W.E.B. Du Bois Lecture Series, Harvard University), appeared earlier this year. It deals comparatively and retrospectively with the three Caribbean societies in which he did most of his ethnographic work.

Professor Mintz is Research Professor and Wm. L. Straus Jr. Professor Emeritus in the Department of Anthropology. Among his awards and honors are Yale’s DeVane (Phi Beta Kappa) Medal for undergraduate teaching (1972); the Thomas Henry Huxley Medal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland (1992); and the Distinguished Lecturer prize of the American Anthropological Association (1994). Mintz is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.